

MCCRACKIN, JACKSON

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MCCRACKIN, JACKSON, born at Abbeville, South Carolina, December 14, 1828; married on December 28, 1882, to Mrs. Josephine (Woemptner) Clifford, widow of Lieutenant James A. Clifford, U.S. Army, and a daughter of George Ernst and Charlotte Baroness Ende (von Wolfsprung) Woemptner of Petersburg, Prussia; she was a well known writer associated with Bret Harte and Charles W. Stoddard in connection with the Overland Magazine published in San Francisco; author of "Overland Tales", 1877, "Another Juanita", 1893, and "The Woman Who Lost Him" and "Tales of The Army Frontier", 1913; they first became acquainted when she was on a visit to Arizona.

As a young man he went west to the Indian Nation in what is now Oklahoma and then on to New Mexico; was among those who first discovered gold at Pines Altos, N.M., in May, 1860, and was elected Alcalde at that mining camp; he and William S. Oury went together on a prospecting trip into Chihauhua and ever afterwards were great friends; joined the Walker Party late in 1862 at Fort West, N.M., and went with them down the Gila and via Tucson to northern Arizona in the spring of 1863 where gold was discovered on the Hassayampa and on Lynx Creek.

Was one of about 100 men who formed an expedition under the leadership of King S. Woolsey which, between March 29 and April 17, 1864, raided the Apache country east of Prescott as far as the head of Tonto Creek and killed about 30 Indians; listed, Territorial Census, April, 1864, 3d District (Yavapai County), age 36, single, occupation, Miner, resident in Arizona one year, value of personal property \$100; appointed by Governor Goodwin on May 26, 1864 as Judge at precinct No. 4, Lynx Creek, for the first territorial election; at the election on July 18 he was chosen as Representative from Lynx Creek and was reelected from Yavapai County to the 2d Legislature in 1865; incidental to his first election the following story was told;

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Some of his constituents went to him and told him that he was now a member of the First Legislature of the great Territory of Arizona, and he should be dressed and equipped in keeping with the dignity of the office. He replied: "I am in the hands of my constituents." For answer they said: "All right Jack, we'll attend to you." So they formed a committee, took Jack down to Granite Creek, where they had a tub made from the end of a whiskey barrel, filled with water and soap. They gave him a good wash, scrubbed him down with a horse brush, wiped him off well, dressed him up with clean underclothing and a hand-me-down suit; took him to a barber and had his whiskers and hair trimmed properly, and turned him over to the Legislature, a man of the people, a thoroughly clean and progressive Democrat."

Was mining in the Walker District in January, 1870, but is listed in the U.S. Census that year in July at Prescott, age 42, occupation - Miner; according to Patrick Hamilton he was with Lieutenant George W. Cradlebaugh and a detachment of soldiers of the 3d U.S. Cavalry from Camp Verdewhen their camp in the Black Hills in Yavapai County was attacked by Apaches at dawn on January 7, 1871;

Towards morning the slumbering troopers were awakened by the most unearthly yells and showers of arrows and bullets. Every horse at the picket-line was soon shot down. One man was killed, and several wounded, including a doctor (Surgeon Alenzo F. Steigers) who had his arm broken and afterwards amputated at Fort Whipple. When the attack began, Jackson McCracken was sound asleep with his head against a pine tree about eight inches in diameter. He was in full range of the fire, and hugged the protection of that small tree with praiseworthy pertinacity. Being a large, fat man, the little sapling was insufficient to cover his whole body. In telling the story, he used to say that as he heard the arrows whiz by and the bullets strike the tree near his head he would give all of Arizona to have that tree six inches larger.

He and Charles Taylor, James Fine and the Jackson brothers were the owners of the Del Pasco mine in the Pine Grove District, near Crown King; the first 6½ tons of ore that they took out yielded over \$1900; a 5 stamp mill at that mine produced \$7,428 in 1871; discovered the McCrackin mine, 18 miles north of the Bill Williams River, in Mohave County on August 17, 1874; he and his partners sold their claims for \$240,000 in 1875; the mine is said to have produced \$800,000 in bullion in 1878 and to have been the source of a total of over four million ounces of silver.

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Having disposed of his mining interests in Arizona he went to live in San Francisco, California; after his marriage he established a home at Monte Paraiso Ranch near Watts, in Santa Cruz County, where he died on December 17, 1904, aged 76; buried near a large rock not far from his home; McCrackin Post Office, the McCrackin mine and McCrackin Peak, all in Mohave County, Arizona, named for him; the following is extracted from an obituary in the San Jose Mercury written by Gifford Hall;

Well, adios, old pioneer. We've put you where you wanted to be and in your rightful tomb. The summer suns will shine for you. The distant sea and the nearer redwoods will sing your requiem. No long and fulsome eulogy was mouthed over your flower-strewn casket. You didn't need one to whitewash your way through the valley to other side the divide. You lived according to your rights, man among men and neither god nor child.

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